

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT L 00047 131143Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 W
-----005695 131146Z /14
R 130805Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7221

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0047

FOR AF ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, US, XA, MP
SUBJECT: NEW POLICY INITIATIVES IN AFRICA

REF: STATE 311031

1. WE CONCUR THAT INITIATIVES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO CULTIVATE THE LEADERS OF THE SMALLER, MODERATE COUNTRIES WHO HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN OUR FRIENDS, AND WE THINK THE SPECIFIC INITIATIVES PROPOSED ARE APPROPRIATE, THOUGH WE WONDER WHY THE PAPER SEEMS TO SHY AWAY FROM RECOMMENDING HIGHER LEVELS OF BILATERAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THESE FRIENDLY STATES.

2. THE LIST OF TARGET STATES AND LEADERS SEEMS TO US INCOMPLETE. WHILE NOT WISHING TO SPEAK FOR OTHER POSTS WHOSE COUNTRIES APPEAR TO BE MISSING FROM THE LIST, WE ARE SURPRISED TO SEE THAT MAURITIUS IS CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT. ALTHOUGH WE ARE PERFECTLY AWARE OF THE SMALL SIZE AND REMOTENESS OF THIS COUNTRY, AND THE LIGHT WEIGHT IT EXERTS IN WORLD AND AFRICAN CONTINENTAL AFFAIRS, THAT DOES NOT SEEM SUFFICIENT REASON TO LEAVE IT OUT. RAMGOOLAM, IN TERMS OF INFLUENCE, IS CERTAINLY FAR FROM THE STATURE OF PEOPLE LIKE SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET, BUT HE IS NOT LACKING IN CLOSE PERSONAL TIES WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF MODERATE AFRICAN, EUROPEAN AND ASIAN STATESMEN.

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3. OF THE CRITERIA USED FOR SELECTION OF LEADERS OR COUNTRIES TO BE INCLUDED, MAURITIUS SATISFIES ALL IN GOOD MEASURE:
(A) AN ESTABLISHED RECORD OF SUCCESSFUL POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; (B) A HIGHLY RESPECTABLE RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS; (C) A NON-IDEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES; AND (D) SUPPORT FOR THE U.S. POSITION ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES IN THE UN, IF IN THIS CASE ONE CAN OVERLOOK

THE UNGUIDED FREE-WHEELING, INCONSISTENCY AND UNRELIABILITY OF THE MAN ON THE SPOT, MR. RAMPHUL. ONLY ON THE MATTER OF DEGREE OF INFLUENCE WITH LIKE-MINDED AFRICAN LEADERS CAN RAMGOOLAM BE FAULTED, FOR HE DEMONSTRATED A PRONOUNCED UNWILLINGNESS TO GET PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN CONTROVERSIAL AFRICAN QUESTIONS DURING THE YEAR HE HEADED THE OAU (1976-77). NEVERTHELESS, WE WOULD NOT BE WASTING OUR TIME BY TRYING TO ENLIST HIS SUPPORT AND BY CULTIVATING HIM THROUGH THE MEANS SUGGESTED--DIALOGUE, EXCHANGES OF CORRESPONDENCE, VISITS BY U.S. ADMINISTRATION LEADERS, AND GREATER ACCESS TO WASHINGTON OFFICIALDOM.

4. IN SUMMARY, IF WE ARE LOOKING FOR LEADERS OF FRIENDLY, MODERATE STATES WHO ARE COMMITTED TO DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS, PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS AND ORDERLY CHANGE, AND WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE GREATER AMERICAN INFLUENCE AND INTEREST IN AFRICA, MAURITIUS AND RAMGOOLAM SHOULD BE PRIME CANDIDATES.

5. ABOVE ARE NOT SOLELY THE AMBASSADOR'S VIEWS, FOR THE SURPRISING ABSENCE OF MAURITIUS FROM THE LIST WAS INDEPENDENTLY REMARKED UPON BY ALL SUBSTANTIVE OFFICERS WHO READ REFTEL.
KEELEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PORTL00047
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780020-0227
Format: TEL
From: PORT LOUIS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780168/aaaacfab.tel
Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: af30fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 77 STATE 311031
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3781035
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW POLICY INITIATIVES IN AFRICA
TAGS: PGOV, US, XA, MP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/af30fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014